What is claimed is:

1   1.   A method of managing a virtual private network,
2   the method comprising:
3   providing a graphical user interface configured to
4   display at least one link for each of a plurality of
5   computers offering virtual private network functions.

1   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the computers
2   comprise extranet switches.

1   3.   The method of claim 1, wherein the link
2   comprises an HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol) link.

1   4.   The method of claim 1, wherein the link
2   comprises a link to information describing users of the
3   virtual private network functions provided by a computer.

1   5.   The method of claim 1, wherein the link
2   comprises a link to information describing packet filters
3   provided by the computers offering virtual private network
4   functions.

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1        6.   The method of claim 1, wherein the link

2    comprises a link to information describing access hours of

3    one of the computers offering virtual private network

4    functions.


1        7.   The method of claim 1, further comprising

2    providing a list of the computers offering virtual private

3    network functions in the same display as a link.


1        8.   The method of claim 7, wherein the link

2    displayed corresponds to a computer selected from the list

3    of computers offering virtual private network functions.


1        9.   The method of claim 1, further comprising

2    transmitting an HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol) request

3    when a link is selected by a user.


1        10.  A method of managing a virtual private network,

2    the method comprising providing a graphical user interface

3    display that includes:

4        a list of extranet switches offering virtual private

5    network functions; and
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6   a collection of HTTP links for an extranet switch

7   selected from the list, the links causing transmission of an

8   HTTP request.

1   11. A computer program product, disposed on a

2   computer readable medium, for managing a virtual private

3   network, the program comprising instructions for causing a

4   processor to:

5   provide a graphical user interface configured to

6   display at least one link for each of a plurality of

7   computers offering virtual private network functions.

1   12. The computer program product of claim 11,

2   wherein the computers comprise extranet switches.

1   13. The computer program product of claim 11,

2   wherein the link comprises an HTTP (HyperText Transfer

3   Protocol) link.

1   14. The computer program product of claim 11,

2   wherein the link comprises a link to information describing

3   users of the virtual private network functions provided by a

4   computer.

1   15.   The computer program product of claim 11,

2   wherein the link comprises a link to information describing

3   packet filters provided by the computers offering virtual

4   private network functions.

1   16.   The computer program product of claim 11,

2   wherein the link comprises a link to information describing

3   access hours of one of the computers offering virtual

4   private network functions.

1   17.   The computer program product of claim 1,

2   further comprising instructions for causing the processor to

3   provide a list of the computers offering virtual private

4   network functions in the same display the links.

1   18.   The computer program product of claim 17,

2   wherein the link displayed corresponds to a computer

3   selected from the list of computers offering virtual private

4   network functions.

1   19. The computer program product of claim 11,

2 further comprising instructions for causing the processor to

3 transmit an HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol) request when

4 a link is selected.

1   20. A computer program product, disposed on a

2 computer readable medium, for managing a virtual private

3 network, the program including instructions for causing a

4 processor to provide a graphical user interface display that

5 includes:

6   a list of extranet switches offering virtual private

7 network functions; and

8   a collection of HTTP links for an extranet switch

9 selected from the list, the links causing transmission of an

10 HTTP request.

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